

The Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH) is New Jersey's center for information, referral and advocacy for people who are deaf and hard of hearing and their families. DDHH supplies people with hearing loss with assistive technologies to help break down communication barriers in the community, in the workplace and in the home. There are an estimated 720,000 people with hearing loss living in New Jersey. DDHH strives to connect New Jersey's hearing impaired with the services they are entitled to and to help put those services in place.

DDHH responds to dozens of calls, faxes and e-mails each day from people in need of services and information. It publishes *The Monthly Communicator* for over 6,000 subscribers and an annual resource publication, "Organizations Serving People with Hearing Loss in New Jersey." DDHH also is an advocacy agency, keeping the public informed of laws that protect the deaf and hard of hearing, hosting regional forums throughout the state and sponsoring an annual statewide Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Day to increase public awareness about projects and services.

DDHH also co-sponsors workshops at various conferences and events throughout the year on hearing loss. These workshops address a host of issues concerning New Jersey's deaf and hard of hearing populations, including anything from legal to technological issues. DDHH also provides access to these workshops for those with hearing impairments by offering publicity or



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interpreter services. The division coordinates the Interpreter Referral Service that provides sign language interpreters for clients. The division ensures that interpreters are screened, before recommending them to clients.

DDHH runs a Text Telephone (TTY) and Voice Carry Over (VCO) distribution program. The TTY and VCO allow people with hearing impairments total access to telephones using text or voice assistance. People with hearing impairments use TTYs and VCOs in the home or in the workplace.

**FY'01 Total DDHH Budget
\$690,000**